

125,000 WOMEN IN CHICAGO ARE WORKING FOR LESS THAN \$6 A WEEK, SAYS REPORT

There is a proposed minimum wage commission act down in Springfield that is being fought tooth and nail by the bosses who claim that the minimum wage now received by women workers is more than the amount that would be set by a commission and therefore the legalizing of such a commission is an insult to the generosity of the bosses and totally unnecessary.

And distributed by the Women's Trade Union league in the interest of organization among women are statistics showing that 125,000 working women in Chicago are receiving less than \$6 a week, out of which they are compelled to pay for lodging, food, clothing, carfare, dentist's and doctor's bills, and with the statistics is a schedule showing how a woman can live on \$5.90 a week.

One-half of furnished room, \$1.50; 7 breakfasts, rolls and coffee at 10c, equals 70c; 7 diners at 20 cents equals \$1.40; 7 luncheons, coffee and sandwich at 10 cents makes 70 cents; carfare, 60 cents; clothes at \$62 a year or \$1 weekly, making the grand total of \$5.90, which leaves 10 cents a week to cover laundry, dentist, doctor, newspapers, church and recreation, provided the girl who earns \$6 works all the year, and most of them work only 40 weeks of the year.

The report further shows that of the women home workers in Chicago on men's ready-made clothing, 84 per cent earn less than \$6 a week and 15 per cent less than \$2 a week; 12 per cent earn less than \$50 a year, 45 per cent less than \$100 a year, and 10 per cent earn as much or more than \$200 a year.

In the home industries the report gives some interesting data on the sweated prices women receive for making what are termed luxuries for other women.

For a hand-embroidered chiffon shirtwaist front, which takes 2½

hours, a woman receives 28 cents. For cutting out of embroidery she gets 50 cents for 300 yards, and 10 cents is taken out for the sharpening of scissors. For an Irish crochet yoke she gets 9 cents and there is an outlay of 2½ cents for thread. For crocheting mercerized cotton bags she gets \$4 a dozen and there is an outlay of \$1.68 for cotton.

For picking out nuts she gets 4 cents a pounds and no broken meats are paid for. For Irish crochet edging she gets 2 cents a yard and averages 3 yards an hour. For fancy bows, machine made, which retail at 15, 25 and 50 cents apiece, she gets from 10 to 75 cents a dozen and it requires 8 hours to make a dozen at 75 cents and from 6 to 9 hours for a dozen at 50 cents.

For ribbon roses a woman gets 8 cents a dozen and it takes an hour to make a dozen. For one yard of three-knot fringe she gets 9 cents and it takes 50 minutes. For Irish lace buttons, 2 cents a dozen, and she can make 4 dozen an hour. For canvas gloves, light canvas, she gets 15 cents a dozen pair and it takes 2 hours to make them.

In the jewelry and silverware trade the average wage is 8 to 14 cents an hour for the making of my lady's mesh bag, seed pearl hat pins, rope chains, bead strings, etc.

In the candy trade to earn 15 cents an hour a girl must cover 720 pieces of cream candy with chocolate, or 1 piece every five seconds.

For covering boxes with slips of paper, 10 cents per 100 boxes, 6,000 boxes in 6 days, \$6, which means 2 boxes must be covered per minute, every minute, every hour, every day.

The report points out the necessity of organization among women workers in order to secure collective bargaining.

Meanwhile the bosses are down in Springfield chanting psalms of praise.